SUICIDE PREVENTION

An Information Briefing

Purpose

To inform leaders about:

- **Division statistics and high risk profiles**
- **Warning signs of suicidal behavior**
- **How to respond**

Suicide Prevention

AR 600-63:

"Commanders at all levels will initiate proactive measures to prevent loss of life within their units due to suicide..."

Para 1-21.d

Outline

- Division Statistics
- High Risk Profiles
- Warning Signs/Response
- Understanding Suicide
- Summary/Conclusion
- Questions

Counseling Statistics

- 300 patient contacts seen by Division Mental Health in last month.
- 300 soldiers seen by chaplains during last month on stress related issues.
- Alcohol abuse plays large role.
- Someone right now is thinking about hurting themselves.

Suicide Statistics

- **Division Wide per Month on Average**
  - **Self Harm - 1**
  - **Suicide Ideations - 12**
  - **Suicide Gestures - 3**
  - **Suicide Attempts - 2**
  - **Suicides - 1 CY 1999 / 3 CY 1998**
  - **All were SGT/SSGT white males using a firearm**
  - **January and Spring are High Risk**

Leaders Response

- **Emphasize training by Chaplains/mental health.**
- **Offer avenues for soldiers to voice suggestions/complaints and provide encouragement to soldiers to come forward with problems.**
- **Don’t dismiss the “weak”.**

High Risk Profile

SUICIDE

- Male
- 25-33 years old__
- White
- E5-E7
- Problems with:
  - Money
  - Marriage
  - Career
- Uses a gun

High Risk Profile

GESTURE/ATTEMPT

- **Male**
- **18-25 years old**
- **White**
- **E1-E4**
- **Problems with:**
  - **Girl/Boy Friend**
  - **Army**
  - **Husband/Wife**
  - **Money**
- **Uses Pills/Blade**

High Risk Profile continued

- Living Alone
- Substance Abuse
- Previous History
- Family History
- High Stress Level
- Psychiatric Illness
- Recent Losses

Warning Signs

Verbal

- **Direct Statements**
  - **“I want to die.”**
  - **“I don’t want to live anymore.”**
- **Indirect Statements**
  - **“I want to go to sleep and never wake up.”**
  - **“They’ll be sorry when I’m gone.”**
  - **“Soon this pain will be over.”**

Hopelessness

Warning Signs

Behavioral

- Sadness and crying
- Change in sleeping pattern
- Change in appetite
- Depressed, listless
- Confused
- Angry & destructive
- Giving away possessions
- Withdrawal
- Final arrangements
- Risk taking
- Drug & alcohol abuse
- Neglecting hygiene
- Change in sexual behavior

Warning Signs

Behavioral

Response

Talk Openly

- **Don’t be afraid to bring up the subject of suicide.**

Response

What can I say?

- What's going on? Tell me about it.
- Do you have any plans to harm yourself?
  - What would you do?
- Have you ever been in a situation like this before?
  - What did you do?

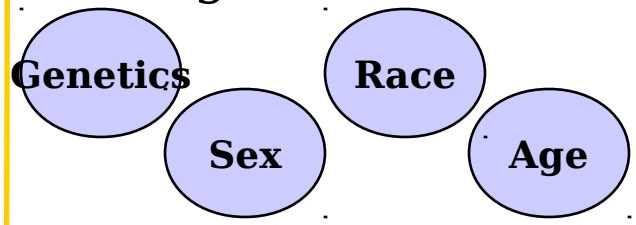
Response

- Take all threats seriously.
- Convey caring.
- Be nonjudgmental and calm.
- Get help.
  - Friend
  - Chain of Command
  - Professionals
- Don’t leave person alone.

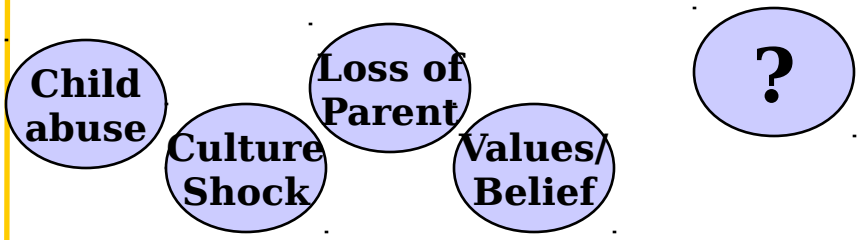
Many Paths to Suicide

Risk Factors

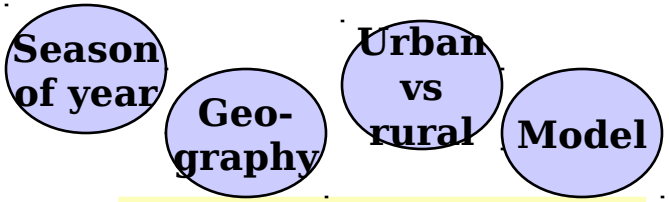
Biological



Personal



Environmental



Many Paths to Suicide

Risk Factors

Biological

- Genetics
- Race
- Sex
- Age

Personal

- Child abuse
- Loss of Parent
- Culture Shock
- Values/ Belief

Environmental

- Season of year
- Geo-graphy
- Urban vs rural
- Model

?

Triggers

"Last Straw"

- Divorce
- Arrest
- UCMJ
- Illness
- Major Loss
- ?

Increasing Hopelessness

Caring for the Spirit of the Warrior

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Increasing Hopelessness

Means of Dea

- Poison
- Gun
- Hanging
- Autocide
- Jumping
- ?

Caring for the Spirit of the Warrior

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Increasing Hopelessness

WALL OF RESISTANCE

Means of Dea

- Poison
- Gun
- Hanging
- Autocide
- Jumping
- ?

Caring for the Spirit of the Warrior

Wall of Resistance

Wall of
Forgiveness
Acceptance
Children/Spouse
uty to Country
Family
Nurturing Environment
Love
Hope
Career
Counseling
Fear
Pride
Medication
Responsibility
Job Security
Duty to Self
Physical & Spiritual Health
Financial Health
Religious Beliefs
Sobriety
Friends

Summary

AR 600-63:

"Suicide prevention is the concern of every leader, commander, supervisor, soldier, and Army civilian"

Para 2-8.a

Questions